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### **REGENTS SEEK CHURCHES ASSISTANCE IN PROMOTING ACADEMIC PREPARATION**

**Baton Rouge** – The Board of Regents for higher education this week is sending letters to spiritual leaders in Louisiana asking them to help get the word out regarding the academic preparation necessary to succeed in Louisiana's colleges and universities. The 8,500 letters seek the assistance of church leaders in sharing information regarding the new admission standards for Louisiana's four-year universities while also promoting the state's postsecondary institutions.

"We need to encourage more of Louisiana's citizens to pursue higher levels of education to ensure a brighter future for themselves and their families. Ministers are a key informational source and we are asking for their assistance in promoting the value of education as an economic development and social welfare tool for each and every one of our citizens," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie.

The information sent to ministers includes an invitation for parents and students to attend "Freshmen Fairs" in their local areas, which are designed to inform the state's 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students about the educational opportunities available in Louisiana as well as the academic preparation needed in order to succeed. Invitations to the Freshmen Fairs are being sent to high schools throughout the state for distribution to students.

In addition to the invitations, the Regents have also provided ministers with a copy of the letter which has been sent to the parents of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students, reminding them that their sons and

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## **ADD ONE**

### **REGENTS SEEK CHURCHES ASSISTANCE**

daughters will be the first class to be fully affected by the Regent's new college admissions standards that become effective in 2005.

"We want to ensure that everyone is aware of the changes in admission standards that require students to focus on a college preparatory curriculum in order to fully prepare for the rigors of college," said Savoie. "I am pleased that the campuses will be hosting activities to provide additional information to parents and students about the admission standards as well as the quality educational offerings in our technical colleges, community colleges and four-year universities."

The letter to ministers states that, beginning in the fall 2005, students who want to enroll in a Louisiana public four-year university must have completed the Regents' high school core academic curriculum (currently the TOPS core), and one of the following:

- a high school grade point average of 2.0 or higher, or
- an ACT composite score of 20 or higher, or
- graduation from high school in the top 50% of the class

Ministers are invited to share copies of the Regents' correspondence with the parents in their congregation or to print the information in the church bulletins.

The new admissions standards framework is part of the Board of Regents' new *Master Plan for Public Postsecondary Education*.

"This new plan," the commissioner said, "is a major initiative to create a postsecondary system that is more effective and one that will increase student access and success."

Savoie described the new admissions framework as an "unprecedented effort to set clear expectations early on, to ensure students have the resources to meet their full potential and to provide a reasonable institution-student match. A statewide admissions criteria framework has never been used before in Louisiana. It is a bold and necessary step. I know that the ministers in our state will effectively assist us in sharing this message throughout Louisiana."